



9110-04-P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 165

[Docket Number USCG-2017- 0935]

RIN 1625-AA00

Safety Zone; Delaware River; Marcus Hook, NJ

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

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**SUMMARY:** The Coast Guard proposes to establish a temporary safety zone on the waters of the Delaware River between Marcus Hook Range and Tinicum Range. The safety zone will temporarily restrict vessel traffic from transiting or anchoring in portions of the Delaware River while rock blasting, dredging, and rock removal operations are being conducted to facilitate the Main Channel Deepening project for the Delaware River. The safety zone is needed to protect personnel, vessels, and the marine environment from hazards created by rock blasting, dredging, and rock removal operations. Entry of vessels or persons into this zone is prohibited unless specifically authorized by the Captain of the Port (COTP) or his designated representatives. We invite your comments on this proposed rulemaking.

**DATES:** Comments and related material must be received by the Coast Guard on or before [INSERT DATE 7 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments identified by docket number USCG-2017-0935 using the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. See the “Public Participation and Request for Comments” portion of the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section for further instructions on submitting comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** If you have questions about this rulemaking, call or email Petty Officer Amanda Boone, Waterways Management Branch, U.S. Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay; telephone (215) 271-4889, e-mail

Amanda.N.Boone@uscg.mil.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Table of Abbreviations**

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COTP	Captain of the Port
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FR	<b>Federal Register</b>
NPRM	Notice of proposed rulemaking
§	Section
U.S.C.	United States Code

**II. Background, Purpose, and Legal Basis**

The Army Corps of Engineers notified the Coast Guard that Great Lakes Dredging and Dock Company will be conducting rock blasting, dredging, and rock removal operations, beginning November 30, 2017 through March 15, 2018, to facilitate the deepening of the main navigational channel to the new project depth of 45 feet. The COTP has determined that potential hazards associated with rock blasting, dredging, and rock removal operations will be a safety concern for anyone within 500 yards of the drill boat APACHE or dredges TEXAS and NEW YORK.

The purpose of this proposed rulemaking is to ensure the safety of personnel,

vessels, and the marine environment within a 500-yard radius of rock blasting, dredging, and rock removal operations. The Coast Guard proposes this rulemaking under authority in 33 U.S.C. 1231.

### **III. Discussion of Proposed Rule**

This proposed rule would establish a safety zone from November 30, 2017 through March 15, 2018. The safety zone will cover all navigable waters in the Delaware River within 500 yards of vessels and machinery being used by personnel to conduct rock blasting, dredging, and rock removal operations between Marcus Hook Range and Tinicum Range. The safety zone will be enforced in an area and in a manner that does not conflict with transiting commercial and recreational traffic, except for the short periods of time when explosive detonation are being conducted. The explosive detonation will not occur more than three times a day. At all other times, at least one side of the main navigational channel will be open for vessels to transit.

The duration of the zone is intended to protect personnel, vessels, and the marine environment in these navigable waters while operations are being conducted. For the duration of the project, in the vicinity of the rock blasting, rock removal, and dredging operation, one side of the main navigational channel will be closed. Vessels wishing to transit the safety zone in the main navigational channel may do so if they can make satisfactory passing arrangements with drill boat APACHE or the dredges TEXAS and NEW YORK in accordance with the Navigational Rules in 33 CFR subchapter E via VHF-FM channel 13 at least 30 minutes prior to arrival. If vessels are unable to make satisfactory passing arrangements with the drill boat APACHE or the dredges TEXAS and NEW YORK, they may request permission from the COTP, or his designated

representative, on VHF-FM channel 16. All vessels must operate at the minimum safe speed necessary to maintain steerage and reduce wake.

No vessels may transit through the safety zone during times of explosive detonation. During explosive detonation, vessels will be required to maintain a 500 yard distance from the drill boat APACHE. The drill boat APACHE will make broadcasts via VHF-FM channels 13 and 16, at 15 minutes, 5 minutes, and 1 minute prior to detonation, as well as a countdown to detonation on VHF-FM channel 16. Sector Delaware Bay will ensure notice is given to the maritime community of dates and times of blasting via broadcast notice to mariners on VHF-FM channel 16. After every explosive detonation, a survey will be conducted to ensure the navigational channel is clear for vessels to transit. The drill boat APACHE will broadcast via VHF-FM channel 13 and 16, when the survey has been completed and the channel is clear to transit. Vessels wishing to transit the safety zone in the main navigational channel may do so if they can make satisfactory passing arrangements with drill boat APACHE or the dredges TEXAS and NEW YORK in accordance with the Navigational Rules in 33 CFR subchapter E via VHF-FM channel 13 at least 30 minutes prior to arrival. If vessels are unable to make satisfactory passing arrangements with the drill boat APACHE or the dredge TEXAS and NEW YORK, they may request permission from the COTP, or his designated representative, on VHF-FM channel 16.

#### **IV. Regulatory Analyses**

We developed this proposed rule after considering numerous statutes and Executive orders related to rulemaking. Below we summarize our analyses based on a number of these statutes and Executive orders and we discuss First Amendment rights of

protestors.

#### A. Regulatory Planning and Review

Executive Orders 12866 and 13563 direct agencies to assess the costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits. Executive Order 13771 directs agencies to control regulatory costs through a budgeting process. This NPRM has not been designated a “significant regulatory action,” under Executive Order 12866. Accordingly, the NPRM has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and pursuant to OMB guidance it is exempt from the requirements of Executive Order 13771.

This regulatory action determination is based on the size, location, duration, and traffic management of the safety zone. The Coast Guard does not anticipate a significant economic impact because the safety zone will be enforced in an area and in a manner that does not conflict with transiting commercial and recreational traffic, except for the short periods of time when explosive detonations are being conducted. The blasting detonations will not occur more than three times a day. At all other times, at least one side of the main navigational channel will be open for vessels to transit. Moreover, the Coast Guard will work in coordination with the pilots to ensure vessel traffic is limited during the times of detonation and Broadcast Notice to Mariners are made via VHF-FM marine channel 13 and 16 when blasting operations will occur.

#### B. Impact on Small Entities

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, 5 U.S.C. 601–612, as amended, requires Federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. The term “small entities” comprises small businesses, not-for-profit

organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000. The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this proposed rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

While some owners or operators of vessels intending to anchor in or transit the safety zone may be small entities, for the reasons stated in section IV.A above, this rule will not have a significant economic impact on any vessel owner or operator.

If you think that your business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction qualifies as a small entity and that this rule would have a significant economic impact on it, please submit a comment (see ADDRESSES) explaining why you think it qualifies and how and to what degree this rule would economically affect it.

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-121), we want to assist small entities in understanding this proposed rule. If the rule would affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions concerning its provisions or options for compliance, please contact the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section. The Coast Guard will not retaliate against small entities that question or complain about this proposed rule or any policy or action of the Coast Guard.

#### C. Collection of Information

This proposed rule would not call for a new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520).

#### D. Federalism and Indian Tribal Governments

A rule has implications for federalism under Executive Order 13132, Federalism,

if it has a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. We have analyzed this proposed rule under that Order and have determined that it is consistent with the fundamental federalism principles and preemption requirements described in Executive Order 13132.

Also, this proposed rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it would not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes. If you believe this proposed rule has implications for federalism or Indian tribes, please contact the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section.

#### E. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531-1538) requires Federal agencies to assess the effects of their discretionary regulatory actions. In particular, the Act addresses actions that may result in the expenditure by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector of \$100,000,000 (adjusted for inflation) or more in any one year. Though this proposed rule would not result in such an expenditure, we do discuss the effects of this rule elsewhere in this preamble.

#### F. Environment

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Department of Homeland Security Management Directive 023-01 and Commandant Instruction M16475.ID, which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42

U.S.C. 4321-4370f), and have made a preliminary determination that this action is one of a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. This proposed rule involves a safety zone that would prohibit entry within 500 yards of rock blasting, dredging, and rock removal. Normally such actions are categorically excluded from further review under paragraph 34(g) of Figure 2-1 of Commandant Instruction M16475.1D. A preliminary Record of Environmental Consideration supporting this determination is available in the docket where indicated under ADDRESSES. We seek any comments or information that may lead to the discovery of a significant environmental impact from this proposed rule.

#### G. Protest Activities

The Coast Guard respects the First Amendment rights of protesters. Protesters are asked to contact the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section to coordinate protest activities so that your message can be received without jeopardizing the safety or security of people, places, or vessels.

#### **V. Public Participation and Request for Comments**

We view public participation as essential to effective rulemaking, and will consider all comments and material received during the comment period. Your comment can help shape the outcome of this rulemaking. If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this rulemaking, indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation.

We encourage you to submit comments through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. If your material cannot be submitted using



<http://www.regulations.gov>, contact the person in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section of this document for alternate instructions.

We accept anonymous comments. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov> and will include any personal information you have provided. For more about privacy and the docket, visit <http://www.regulations.gov/privacyNotice>.

Documents mentioned in this NPRM as being available in the docket, and all public comments, will be in our online docket at <http://www.regulations.gov> and can be viewed by following that website's instructions. Additionally, if you go to the online docket and sign up for email alerts, you will be notified when comments are posted or a final rule is published.

### **List of Subjects 33 CFR Part 165**

Harbors, Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Security measures, Waterways

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard proposes to amend 33 CFR 165 as follows:

#### **PART 165—REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS**

1. The authority citation for part 165 continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** 33 U.S.C 1231; 50 U.S.C. 191; 33 CFR 1.05-1, 6.04-1, 6.04-6, and 160.5; Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1.

2. Add § 165.T05-0935, to read as follows:

#### **§ 165.T05-0935 Safety Zone, Delaware River; Marcus Hook, PA**

(a) **Location.** The following area is a safety zone: all the navigable waters of the Delaware River within 500 yards of vessels and machinery performing rock blasting,

rock removal, and dredging operations, between Marcus Hook Range and Tinicum Range.

(b) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) Designated representative means any Coast Guard commissioned, warrant, or petty officer who has been authorized by the Captain of the Port to assist with enforcement of the safety zone described in paragraph (a) of this section.

(c) Regulations. (1) Vessels wishing to transit the safety zone in the main navigational channel may do so if they can make satisfactory passing arrangements with the drill boat APACHE or the dredges TEXAS and NEW YORK, as applicable, in accordance with the Navigational Rules in 33 CFR subchapter E via VHF-FM channel 13 at least 30 minutes prior to arrival. If vessels are unable to make satisfactory passing arrangements with the drill boat APACHE or the dredges TEXAS and NEW YORK, they may request permission from the Captain of the Port, or his designated representative, on VHF-FM channel 16.

(2) The operator of any vessel requesting to transit through the safety zone shall proceed as directed by the drill boat APACHE, the dredges TEXAS and NEW YORK, or the designated representative of the Captain of the Port and must operate at the minimum safe speed necessary to maintain steerage and reduce wake.

(3) No vessels may transit through the safety zone during times of explosive detonation. During explosive detonation, vessels will be required to maintain a 500 yard distance from the drill boat APACHE. The drill boat APACHE will make broadcasts, via VHF-FM Channel 13 and 16, at 15 minutes, 5 minutes, and 1 minute prior to detonation, as well as a countdown to detonation on VHF-FM Channel 16.

(4) After every explosive detonation a survey will be conducted by the dredging contractor to ensure the navigational channel is clear for vessels to transit. The drill boat APACHE will broadcast, via VHF-FM channel 13 and 16, when the survey has been completed and the channel is clear to transit. Vessels requesting to transit through the safety zone shall proceed as directed by the Captain of the Port and contact the drill boat APACHE on VHF-FM channel 13 to make safe passing arrangements.

(d) Enforcement. The U.S. Coast Guard may be assisted by federal, state and local agencies in the patrol and enforcement of the zone.

(e) Enforcement period. This rule will be enforced from December 01, 2017, through March 15, 2018, unless cancelled earlier by the Captain of the Port.

Dated: November 7, 2017

Scott E. Anderson,  
Captain, U. S. Coast Guard  
Captain of the Port, Delaware Bay  
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